

REMARKS

Claims 1, 5, 6, 19, 23, 34, 38, and 39 have been amended. No new matter is introduced by the amendments of these claims. Accordingly, claims 1-51 remain pending.

The Examiner has rejected claims 1, 2, 4, 6, 10-14, 16, 17, 19, 20, 22, 25-29, 31, 32, 34, 35, 37, 39, 43-47, and 50 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Laster et al (US 2001/0029478) in view of Capiel (US 6,449,634). Additionally, claims 3, 5, 8, 9, 15, 18, 21, 23, 30, 33, 36, 38, 41, 42, 48, and 51 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Laster and Capiel in view of Abendroth (US 2002/0087371). The Examiner's rejections are respectfully traversed as follows.

Claim 1 is directed towards a “method for provisioning services.” Claim 1 further recites “providing a service manager system operable to mediate messages sent with respect to a plurality of services of a plurality of different providers.” That is, the service manager system is configured to mediate messages with respect to a plurality of service and providers, not merely a single service or service provider. Claim 1 also recites “receiving a first offer pertaining to a first service and a second offer pertaining to a second service that differs from the first service, the first offer being provided by a first provider of the first service to which the first offer pertains and being transmitted from a first device to the service manager system, the second offer being provided by a second provider of the second service to which the second offer pertain and being transmitted from a second device to the service manager” and “receiving identifying information regarding one or more first invitees to be invited to access the first service of the first offer, the identifying information regarding the one or more first invitees being transmitted from the first device to the service manager system, and receiving identifying information regarding one or more second invitees to be invited to access the second service of the second offer, the identifying information regarding the one or more second invitees being transmitted from the second device to the service manager system.” Claim 1 also recites “in response to receipt of the first offer and the identifying information regarding the one or more first invitees, providing by the service manager system an invitation to each of the one or more first invitees to access the first service of the first offer through the service manager system and based on the received identifying information regarding the one or more first invitees.” A similar operation is repeated for the second offer for the second service. Independent claims 19 and 34 recite mechanisms for performing or providing the operations of claim 1.

Embodiments of the present invention are configured to mediate access to a plurality of services from a plurality of providers. This mediation can flexibly provide service management for any number and type of services and providers. To clarify this feature, claim 1 has been

amended to recite limitations for handling two different offers from two different services being transmitted from two different devices.

In contrast, the primary reference Laster is directed towards a single service application, namely an auction service. Thus, Laster necessarily fails to teach or suggest the handling, by a service manager system, of two different offers from two different services from two different devices, in the manner claimed. Laster does not teach a flexible system that can manage offers to a diverse number and type of services, in the manner claimed. Likewise, the secondary reference Capiel suffers from the same deficiency. Capiel is directed towards handling emails, rather than managing offers from different services, in the manner claimed.

The Examiner's rejections of the dependent claims are also respectfully traversed. However, to expedite prosecution, all of these claims will not be argued separately. Claims 2-18, 20-33, and 35-51 each depend directly or indirectly from independent claims 1, 19, or 34 and, therefore, are respectfully submitted to be patentable over cited art for at least the reasons set forth above with respect to claims 1, 19, or 34. Further, the dependent claims require additional elements that when considered in context of the claimed inventions further patentably distinguish the invention from the cited art.

Applicant believes that all pending claims are allowable and respectfully requests a Notice of Allowance for this application from the Examiner. Should the Examiner believe that a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of this application, the undersigned can be reached at the telephone number set out below.

Respectfully submitted,
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